1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

804 light enough to carry wherever an article of corresponding size is to be manufactured. An object to be fabricated in dimensions to match another article may also be compared to the latter by means of a length of string in which a knot is tied at the required length. Thus in the construction of a coffin, the length and width of the deceased were observed to be taken with a piece of string. The height of the reclining body, however, was ignored, hence the coffin was made too low.

412 401 Wedges for splitting wood are manufactured as required. They are cut from the lower portion of a black spruce sapling and sharpened with an ax to a long tapering blade. Chips of wood are used as wedges in whip sawing. The back of a long handled ax head is used as a maul.

● 415 322 The implements associated with most cabins are a broom, funnel, and a dustpan cut from a five gallon oil can. One family used an eagle wing as a whisk broom. When cooking is done on open fires, the tea stick is an indispensable piece of household equipment. It consists of a green willow pole, five or six feet long and an inch or more in its greatest diameter. The heavier section of the pole is sharpened and thrust into the ground at a forty-five degree angle to the fire. The upper section of the pole is notched for the handle of the kettle. The pole may be turned aside from the fire in removing the vessel. In a few days, when the ground becomes too soft to support the pole, a rock may be placed on top of the buried portion of the wood and another stone thrust into the apex made by the pole as it leaves the ground. Tea poles are discarded when they become dry or charred. When meat is roasted in front of open fires smaller poles, about three feet high are cut, and thrust into the ground almost vertically, the meat being hung on a sharpened point.

417 322 A considerable amount of apparatus is manufactured. In front of each cabin is found a sawhorse for sawing wood. This consists of a bedlog about six inches in diameter and five or six feet long. Close to each end two spruce saplings, about four feet long and an inch and a half in diameter, are driven into the ground so that they cross each other at about a thirty degree angle. The wood to be sawed is placed in these angles. The bedlog is sometimes also used in splitting sawed lengths of wood. In the bush near the settlement are one or more saw pits. Ladders are made to reach caches. The rungs are either set in holes or nailed to side pieces. At either end of the ladder braces are nailed to the side pieces of lumber. For carpentering, a felled tree is levelled with an ax and raised on two stumps to serve as a workbench. Another piece of apparatus is used for bending green lumber in the manufacture of toboggans and sleds (Fig. 3, F, and Pl. 6, A). About six feet long, this consists of the lower trunk and part of the root of a spruce tree. Unnecessary portions of the root and trunk are trimmed away so that the wood exhibits a natural curve which is hewed and planed on its upper surface. Two poles, about two inches in diameter, are nailed to either side of the trunk. Where they project a few inches in front of the root, a crosspiece about eighteen inches long is lashed. The space between the root and crosspiece holds the lumber inserted for bending.

224 [432] Traps, which are an important category of capital goods, are generally purchased, but a few men still build deadfalls or set two or three snares for wolf and coyote. A trapper generally owns from thirty to fifty steel traps of various sizes some of which are given to

1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

hide which is to be cleaned. Another pole is placed across the lower portion of the horizontally leaning poles and lashed in position. The skin is then perforated and fastened to the frame. When hides are to be softened, they are fixed on a smaller frame, consisting of four poles, in which the side poles are anchored in the ground perpendicularly (Pl. 8, D).

Construction of most apparatus and all tool making is done by men. Young girls sometimes make stretchers for squirrel skin and women commonly erect the poles for stretching and softening moosehide.

Machines employed by the Kaska have either been purchased from traders or adapted from white sources. Among the machines in the former category are sewing machines, owned by women but purchased by men, and outboard motors, the property of men. A pulley is a common possession and in the fall is used in conjunction with an improvised winch to pull boats out of the water. The winch is made by driving two poles about four inches in diameter and five feet long into the ground about six feet apart. Each pole is grooved on the side which is away from the water and about six inches from the top. A smooth green pole, about four inches in diameter, is fitted into these grooves to serve as a winch. The pull of the boat is sufficient to keep the winch from slipping out of the grooves. A handle is made by lashing a green spruce pole, about two feet long and two inches in diameter, at right angles to the winch.

Every household uses such cooking utensils as frying pans, straight kettles varying in size from one to five quarts, coffee pots, bowls, plates, cups, silver plated spoons and forks, wash basins, and washtubs. A few families have also accumulated china cups and dishes. Bottles and jars are generally saved for storing homebrew and may also function as baby bottles, candlesticks, and sugar bowls. The fifty pound drums in which dehydrated milk is purchased are used to store rice and flour. Empty sugar and flour sacks are widely used to contain tea, rice, meat, and many other commodities. Discarded oil tins are used for storing gasoline and kerosene.

Domestically manufactured utensils include moosehide gun cases, embroidered with silk thread, needle cases, made of scraps of cotton cloth, sewing kits of velvet fitted with pockets and embroidered with silk thread, and envelopes of birch bark containing sinew line or pounded beaver castors.

Productive capital. In general the producer goods needed by an individual or family, both home constructed and purchased, are found in every settlement. Thus each family is in an equal position to secure or create necessary consumer goods. Even if an object is not owned by an individual, it may generally be borrowed from others within the winter settlement or from nearby neighbors. If not immediately required by the owner, such articles are readily loaned, and rent is rarely or never demanded. If an outboard motor is loaned, the borrower is only expected to supply his own gasoline. When dogs are loaned, it is with the sole stipulation that they will be reasonably well fed and otherwise cared for. In short, the necessary productive capital is widely distributed or generally accessible.

EXPLOITATIVE ACTIVITIES

During nine or more months of the year, from the middle of August till late in May, the Kaska Indians are actively occupied in exploiting the resources of their sub-Arctic environ-

231 Salish. Any kind of stout line of leather or rawhide was used. To give greater strength some of these were plaited. No bone toggles were used on the lines, which were simply tied. Dogs were fed on meat and fish and ate all kinds of scraps and refuse around the camp. When their owners had an abundance of food they got plenty to eat and when food was scarce they necessarily received very little. The Tahltan aver that their old breed of dogs could not live at the coast. Many times Tlingit trading parties took dogs home with them, but in all cases these dogs lived but a short time or became very unhealthy. They developed pulmonary troubles and soon died or became mangy. Whites who have taken away to different parts of the coast specimens of the small Tahltan "bear dog" say that in all cases these dogs soon became sick and died.

[224] 492 The Tahltan claim that formerly dogs were used by them for hunting only, and it is only about fifty years ago since they first commenced to pack and haul with dogs.

[177] In fact it seems packing and driving came in about the time of the Cassiar gold rush in 1874, and for this reason, the introduction of these processes is generally credited to the Whites. Some Indians aver that a little packing had been done a few years previous to this time. However this may be, packing and driving generally came in about this date. Wooden sleds and dog harnesses of the common kinds used by Whites in the North are those in use, and the methods of driving appear to differ in no ways from those generally prevailing in the North.

[193]

492 In packing dogs' pack-bags are used. Some 445 of those formerly in use were made of leather, but at the present day all are made of different kinds of canvas or tent material. In shape they are like saddle-bags used on horses. Most of them are of a single strip of canvas of the proper length and width, the middle part of which is intended to rest on the dog's back. The ends are doubled up outwards and sewed to the body so as to form a bag on each side of the dog, a sufficient loose end being left on each side to stretch over and cover the mouth of the bags. Sometimes one loose end is longer than the other, the shorter one simply covering the mouth of the bag of which it is an extension whilst the other reaches over the back of the dog and covers bo... Sometimes both are of equal length, one loose end being tucked

under the other across the back of the dog, either end being available as top cover. Material to be packed is placed in the bags, it being necessary to have the contents of each about equal in weight. The covers of the bags are fastened down with a lacing of thongs passed through a series of loops of the same material in the upper sides of the bags, the lacing passing from one bag to the other across the lids /sic/ and the back of the dog. The bags are kept in place by a single slash rope of leather or canvas about ten or twelve feet long which is first passed around the ends of the bags below the sides of the dog and then around the bags underneath the dog and back over the top to the point of commencement. There are several slightly different methods of fastening the bags. (For specimen of the common dog pack-bag of the Tahltan see National Museum specimen No. 39).

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Dogs pack weights of twenty to fifty pounds according to their size or strength. Families have two or three to six or more dogs. The difficulty of feeding them at certain seasons almost alone limits their number. Large active dogs good for both packing and driving and well enough haired to withstand severe cold are in demand and some dogs exchange for as high as $40.00 or even more.

492 [435]

Horses

231 [177] 492

The Tahltans saw the first horses about 1875, when pack trains of horses and mules arrived overland from the southern interior of British Columbia to pack during the gold mining excitement. The packers with these trains were Whites of various nationalities, Mexicans and Indians from the Shuswap and Lillooet tribes and from Thompson River. Accompanying the latter were two Shahaptin Indians, one a Yakima and one a Wallawalla. Most of these pack train hands soon returned, and after a time most help of this kind was supplied by young men of the Tahltan, who thus became acquainted with horse packing, and horse management, including shoeing of horses. With the diminishment of mining most of the pack trains had left by 1884. However, some horses were retained in the country for packing purposes by traders and others and there was again an increase of horses and packing during the Klondike excitement. Later packing of supplies for the Yukon Telegraph Line and development of big game hunting due to the annual arrival of wealthy whites, added to the packing done by traders

neck by a leather string. If a girl drank water without the tube, the water would hurt her stomach and cause her internal sickness of some kind. Tubes were made of the long wing bones of swans and geese. Eagle wing bones and lynx bones were not used. As a rule they were entirely unornamented in any way. They were generally carried in tube carriers made of square and oblong pieces of skin varying in size and worn with a string around the neck. The piece of skin was folded in two and the middle sewed across a little below the fold making a pocket to fit the circumference of the tube. The skin below formed two flaps which were often ornamented with fringes and pendants as well.

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The tube was inserted and carried in the pocket, the embroidered flaps below being merely for ornament. Some were made of single or undoubled skin. These fancy tube carriers are nowadays generally made of cloth and embroidered with bead or silk work. (See National Museum Specimen No. 48.) Also, there are good specimens illustrated by Emmons, Plate VIII B.&E. Scratchers were made of various kinds of bones. (See National Museum Specimen No. 48.) is of swan bone. The flaps are of caribou leather beaded and ornamented with beaver claws and strips of wooden bead work. The carrying strap is of leather into which bird's down is twisted. A small bag of grease was carried attached to

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A small bag of grease was carried attached to the same neck string as the drinking tube or to the ornamented flaps of the latter, and every day, early in the morning, the girl smeared her mouth or lips so she would not require much food. The sack was replenished from time to time as required. (See National Museum Specimen No. 48.)

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For the first three to five days, the girl when eating wore a necklace consisting of a bent willow rod wrapped with hair of goat or sheep, etc. Of each kind of variety of meat she ate, she tied a small portion to the necklace with a string. This was done so the game would not become angry or sorry because she (a pubescent) had eaten of their flesh. If the animals became sorry, insulted, or angry they would withhold (or withdraw) themselves and the hunters would be unable to get them or have other bad luck in hunting them. For the same reasons fresh meat was taboo. If, by necessity, other meat or food not being available, the girl had to eat fresh meat of the principal game, she wore a mask whilst eating it. These masks were made of light willow hoops covered with skin of goat, sheep or other game animals. The only fresh meat which girls could eat with impunity was that of porcupine, ptarmigan and the different varieties of grouse. On the first day the girl smeared her face with pitch or gum of trees, and blackened it by rubbing charcoal over

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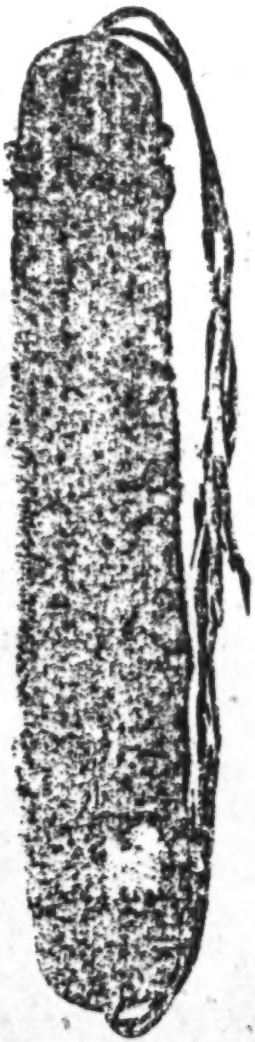

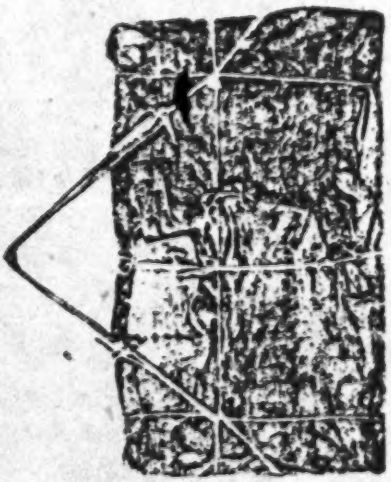

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[end plate 17]

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Upper Liard

fish-eating ducks made them unpopular for food and the raven was deemed to be inedible. Porcupine and bear brains exercised a debilitating effect on the body and hence were not used in preparing food. In periods of severe hunger the poorer tasting foods and, perhaps, even the magically dangerous animals like mink and otter would be consumed. Under the stress of starvation selectivity broke down to a point where moosehide might be eaten. Although strong repugnance governed the consumption of human flesh,[13] unproductive periods accompanied by severe hunger sometimes led to cannibalism. Tales of confirmed cannibals occur in oral tradition. There is the story of a man widely feared for his perverted appetite, which led him to regard human beings as game. He ate anyone he came across, including his wife and several children. Three sons, however, he spared because they could work for him. Indeed, they specialized in the task of killing men for their cannibal father after the latter grew too old to hunt. Approaching a camp this man would say, "You can kill birds for me now." Then, while the boys went off he started water boiling in readiness for the meat that they would bring back. The tale ends with the old cannibal and his sons meeting death at the hands of an intended victim who possessed exceptionally strong supernatural power.

Edible foods were both prepared for immediate consumption and preserved to be eaten at a later time. Boiling constituted the primary technique of cooking. Some meats, like lynx, were double boiled, the first water being discarded. After the meat had been cooked a "soup" was customarily made, onion greens or animal blood being added to the stock. "Soup took the place of tea in the old days. When people had finished with the meat they always drank the water in which the meat had been cooked." Several methods of boiling were known. Water placed in a basket tightly woven from split spruce roots could be brought to a boil with the aid of hot stones picked from ashes with spruce brush and blown free of dirt. The meat, cut in small pieces, was dropped into the boiling liquid. These vessels sometimes rested on the ground but were also supported a foot or so above the earth on a circle of wooden pegs. Another way of bringing water to boil is reminiscent of the Plains Indians. A pit was dug in the soil and lined with semi-tanned skin or, less commonly, with grass. Hot stones constituted the source of heat and keeping the top of the pit covered with spruce bark helped to retain the steam. Caribou and moose stomachs supplied another variety of container in which food could be cooked. The organ was first carefully warmed in front of the blaze to make it dry and hard. Later it might be suspended over the fire to cook the contents. Vegetables boiled included lily bulbs, muskeg apples, and fern roots, the latter only after being stripped of their outer bark. Dried wild rose petals were "powdered" before cooking. Mashing berries during cooking was common. People sometimes broiled meat by suspending it from a broiling stick or from a bone hook that itself hung from a piece of babiche line. Pieces of fat exposed near the heat of fire provided grease, the drippings being caught in bark containers. "Sometimes, when bear fat was rendered alongside a fire, some of the melted grease was taken and mixed with a little snow. It started to foam up just like ice cream." In summer moose horn could be warmed close to the fire and the "velvet" then scraped off and eaten. Only under exceptional circumstances did the Indians eat raw meat or fat.

[13] See below, p. 91.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Upper Liard

Autumn meant the time when caribou, moose, gopher, ground hog, and other meat, as well as fish, would be prepared for preservation. The meat of the larger animals, cut into long, thin slices, was dehydrated by hanging it in the sun over a slow fire. People avoided smoking the meat lest it acquire a bitter flavor. Sheep to be dried were gutted and boned, the carcass then being sewn together. After gutting a gopher, a person placed a stick reaching from the head to the hind quarter in the body cavity and allowed the carcass to dry in the sun. A light pounding softened dehydrated meat before it was stored in a skin bag. From dried meat came pemmican, the flesh being heavily pounded and mixed with fresh berries on a sheet of babiche. After adding melted grease the product was stored in untanned groundhog skins or in a casing of cleaned intestines. Berries could also be prepared by first boiling them and then drying the pulp on sheets of bark. After one layer of berries had dried another was added on top. Eventually an entire dry cake could be rolled up for caching. The Kaska stored food in several kinds of caches. In winter, when simple freezing proved sufficient for preservation, they placed feshly butchered meat surrounded with spruce brush in a snow pit and covered it with snow. In the mountains a cairn made by piling up rocks covered a supply of meat. A wolverine, the informant remarked, never got at food preserved in this manner. Small quantities of meat could also be suspended from a pole lashed to a tree or leaned into a fork. A pile of stones anchored the base of the pole cache. Men constructed stages up to eight feet square in trees, using poles that they lashed together with willow-bark line. The food stored on these platforms was covered with brush weighted down by poles. Men found it easier to build triangular stages set between three conveniently growing small trees. The foundation of the platform consisted of three poles lashed to the supporting trunks. Across this the builder laid a flooring of thinner poles. Four-pole shelter and four-pole platform caches could not be recalled.

Women served food on fresh poplar or birch bark as well as in birch and solid wood dishes. A hole drilled in such a wooden vessel served as a handle. People avoided using one another's dishes for fear that doing so might lead to a small otter emerging from the careless person's mouth. Utensils consisted of bone knives and sheep-horn or wooden spoons. Etiquette prescribed that a knife must never be tossed to another person blade first. Deliberately violating this rule constituted a hostile gesture. Each member of the family helped himself from the cooking pot but children shared the dishes of their parents without fear of any danger. At the end of a meal a person might wipe his fingers along the sides and bottom of the vessel to obtain even the residual film of grease. Both sexes and children ate together, mealtimes providing periods of animated conversation. In addition to the magical avoidances that governed eating[44] there existed the awareness that following a period of near starvation eating must be resumed gradually. Hospitality existed as an established virtue. A stock phrase used in gratitude for a meal was: "Brother-in-law, pretty near you killed me with this party [i.e., feast]." The host in reply would urge his guest to recall the periods of hunger that the latter had been forced to undergo. Food offered to a guest had to be "half-cool" and a serving of piping hot victuals signified an insult. The informant denied the hot-food hospitality test but

[44] See below, p. 109; also see above, p. 38.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Dease River

the beaver men shaped double-tined points for fish spears. The Indians also relied on weirs, while gill nets were set from canoes in summer and under the ice in winter. In the latter season, before a net could be set the ice had to be broken with an ice chisel that was constructed from caribou horn. Dip nets could not be recalled. Angling occurred in summer and winter. Hooks consisted of two splinters of beaver bone crossed and lashed in the form of an x. Fish poisons do not appear to have been known.

In addition to the foods already mentioned the Dease River people readily ate brown bear, porcupine, mountain goat, rabbit, ground hog, squirrel, and gopher. Whether nutritionally important or not, the body louse, foetal animals, moose milk, and sheep milk were also consumed. The eyes of the moose and caribou provided delicacies especially reserved for children. Geese, ducks, loons, swans, ptarmigans, spruce hens, and willow grouse found a welcome part in the diet. Fish eggs did not remain neglected. Animals rarely eaten or reserved for periods of scarcity included the grizzly bear, owl, lynx, and whiskey jack. In the category of never eaten animals occurred the fox, muskrat (perhaps the pack rat is indicated?), fisher, otter, mink, wolverine, wolf, dog, frog, eagle, hawk, crow, and woodpecker. Vomiting is said to have followed any attempt to eat otter, mink, wolverine, or wolf. Mud and lily bulbs remained outside of the diet. Although consumption of human flesh rested under strong prohibition, in periods of great hunger cannibalism admittedly took place. An apprehended eater of human flesh might be isolated from his community for as long as two years. Beliefs that cannibalism led to illness or produced a craving for human flesh were denied. No evidence of ceremonial cannibalism could be obtained.

A large proportion of meat as well as eggs were boiled with the aid of hot stones, in containers of either birch bark or woven spruce root. Caribou and moose stomachs occasionally served as cooking vessels, being hung to one side of the fire. Pit cooking could not be recalled. The water in which meat had been boiled provided a soup, to which onion greens or blood might be added. People prepared animal heads, intestines, and fish on a broiling stick but did not roast food in hot ashes. Rabbits and fowl on isolated occasions might be eaten raw, as when long rain had soaked all available wood thus making it impossible to kindle fire. An informant offered two recipes for "ice cream." The first variety consisted of a mixture of grease, cranberries, and snow. In the second process cranberries or dry soap berries were added to bear or beaver grease in a kettle and the whole mixed together. Snow did not enter the compound but today sugar makes a necessary additional ingredient.

Women preserved a variety of meats, fish, and berries through sun drying. Pemmican, prepared from stone-pounded meat with grease and berries added, was stored in viscera and birch-bark baskets. Caches held the preserved food. A simple type of cache consisted of a 12-foot pole lashed onto a tree with willow-bark line. After wrapping the meat in hide or a sheet of bark, it was suspended about three-quarters of the way up the pole. A ground cache consisted of a box-like structure of poles surrounded with rocks and covered with poles weighed down by additional stones. Men also constructed four-pole shelter caches and elevated them up to 12 feet above the ground, the poles being lashed together with babiche. A double layer of poles, one running at right angles

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Upper Liard

verbal directions.[29] Separated groups of travelers who had need to communicate with each other did so by means of a limited repertory of smoke signals like these: One smoke, "we have killed game"; two smokes, "come over here"; three or four smokes, "we have had an accident (or trouble)."

Men and women packed goods but characteristically women carried the heavier loads. Only lines were utilized in packing, pack sticks being unknown. Pack lines consisted of four-ply braided babiche line. In supporting a back load the line passed along the outside of the arms below the shoulders and proceeded around the top of the head slightly in front of the vertex. If a heavy load caused pack lines to slip down the arms, a padding of moss was added. Men carried small game by tying one end of a packline around the head and the other around the rear legs of the animal. Fowl were transported in sacks of fine, netted babiche lined with babiche hide. Tanned skin bags up to three feet square held clothing and meat in transport. The colon of an animal, closed at one end by sewing, provided a handy container for small tools. Berries and meat were held for short periods in birch-bark baskets. Dogs rarely packed goods prior to European contact. In the spring a pack dog's feet could be protected from crusted snow by moose-skin dog shoes in which small holes allowed the claws to project. Horses remained unseen until 1898.

In the absence of bark-chair baby carriers a woman transported her infant in a moose-skin bag lined with deep moss, the baby facing away from the mother. The bag hung against the mother's back supported by tanned-skin line. In winter a layer of fur lined the moss bag and insulated the child from the bitter cold. Following infancy children rode pick-a-back fashion on the mother's back, supported with a baby strap that passed around the outside of the woman's arms and was tied under her chin. A shawl of animal pelts, tanned with the hair on, provided protection from low temperature.

Several early travelers have remarked on the casual use of water transportation in the early post-contact period. Thus McConnell reports that the Indians "are very inferior canoemen, and are afraid to venture on the river except in its smoothest places. They seldom ascend the river with canoes, as they prefer to carry their outfits along the shore to tracking a boat against a rapid current, and in descending use small spruce bark canoes which they build in a couple of hours and abandon without much loss."[30] Pike writes, "the Cascas and Liard Indians are poor boatmen, and do not make much use of the waterways, preferring to pack heavy loads through the woods to working a canoe upstream; while, if they wish to run down a river, they can make a bark or skin canoe in a few hours, and lose nothing by throwing it away at the end of the run. The birch on the Upper Liard does not grow to a sufficient size to supply bark suitable for canoes so much used on the lower part of the river."[31]

[29] Among the Chilkat Tlingit there were true cardinal directions that took their names from the winds. Drucker, *Culture Element Distributions: XXVI, Northwest Coast* (1950), 204.

[30] McConnell, *Report on an Exploration in the Yukon and Mackenzie Basins* (1890), 35D.

[31] Pike, *Through the Subarctic Forest* (1896), 81–82. Along the Petly River this author "often noticed rafts tied upon the banks, evidently used by the Indians for crossing. . . . It is curious that they do not use canoes on such easily navigable streams, but prefer to pack a load on their backs and make a straight course for their hunting-grounds, crossing and recrossing the main stream to cut off a detour" (204).